

GHOSTS OF VIOLENCE

Atlantic
Ballet Theatre
of Canada

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celebrate *courage*★

A NATIONAL PROJECT OF ATLANTIC BALLET THEATRE OF CANADA

What is your relationship like?

Are there times when your boyfriend/girlfriend:

YES NO

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Hurts your feelings? (For example, calls you names, makes fun of you in front of family and friends, ignores you.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Threatens or intimidates you or someone you care about? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Insists on making the decisions in your relationship? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Pushes or slaps you? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Gets jealous and stops you from doing activities or seeing friends? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Posts information or pictures of you on line that you don't want others to see? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Accesses your private email, facebook or other accounts without your permission? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 Pressures you to go further sexually than you want to? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 Insists that you drink or use drugs when you are together? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 Texts or calls you constantly to ask where you are? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you may be in an abusive relationship. It helps to know the facts.

Read on to learn some tips for avoiding abuse in your relationship.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

KNOW THE FACTS...

- Abuse in student dating relationships happens a lot. Although girls are more likely to be harmed, it can happen to boys too;
- 80% of students think emotional abuse is a serious problem when dating;
- 1 in 3 students say they have a friend who has experienced dating violence;
- 1 in 4 high school girls has experienced forced sexual activity while on a date.

KNOW SOME SOLUTIONS...

- don't confuse jealousy and anger as a sign of love;
- say "no" to doing things you aren't comfortable with;
- break up if you are being pushed around, isolated or controlled;
- know your rights – no one has the right to force you to do things you aren't comfortable doing;
- ask for help – you are worth it!

BE A SUPPORTIVE FRIEND!

Did you know that many student stay in abusive dating relationships because their friends make excuses for the abuse or say it's normal. But friends can be part of the solution if they realize that there is no excuse for abuse. Consider the following:

- If you see signs of abuse in your friend's relationship – like bruises, isolation, sadness, depression, or falling grades - offer your support.
- Listen to your friend without being judgmental.
- Tell your friend that the abuse is not his or her fault. No one deserves to be treated that way.
- Say that you care.
- Encourage your friend to think carefully about his or her safety and to make a plan to get to a safe place in an emergency.
- Speak out when you see anyone doing abusive things. It's not a laughing matter when someone makes a joke that puts down or humiliates their date.
- Suggest that your friend talk to a trusted adult or counsellor – and encourage the person acting abusively to get help too.

WHAT ARE SOME SIGNS OF AN ABUSIVE DATING RELATIONSHIP?

EMOTIONAL ABUSE / VERBAL ABUSE

- isolation from friends and family
- threats of suicide
- threats to harm you, your family, pets or property. (threatening to cause harm may also be an assault.)
- name calling
- put downs
- manipulation and control
- stalking (may include repeated harassment such as phoning or following you everywhere, constantly sending you text messages, etc.)
- spreading rumours
- possessiveness
- jealousy

PHYSICAL ABUSE (includes various degrees of harm)

- hitting
- slapping
- pinching
- pushing
- punching
- beating
- shoving
- kicking
- stabbing or shooting
- burning
- choking

SEXUAL ABUSE (includes any activity of a sexual nature without your consent)

- forced or coerced sex
- sexual accusations
- unwanted touching or kissing
- unwanted sexual acts

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES:

- You can talk about your feelings without fear your partner will make fun of you or put you down.
- You encourage one another to have some personal space - you don't have to be together 24/7. And you don't get upset or jealous when you are apart.
- You trust one another and can talk openly and honestly.
- You are not afraid to say what you think and you like to know what your partner thinks even if you don't always agree.
- You respect one another and talk things out calmly even when you have disagreements which everybody does.
- You support one another and you both work at having a healthy relationship.
- You take responsibility for your own actions and don't blame the other person.
- You like each other for who you are and don't try to change the other person.
- You never force one another to do things or go places that make you feel uncomfortable.

TIPS FOR SAFER DATING

- Consider group activities or a double-date when you first start to see someone.
- Know where you are going and tell a parent or friend what time you expect to be home.
- Ask lots of questions and get to know each other. What were his or her past relationships like? Were others always to blame for things that went wrong?
- Tell your date when you don't like his or her behavior or comments.
- If you are feeling uncomfortable, trust your instincts. Stay calm, but find a way to safely leave the situation.
- Be aware that using drugs or drinking alcohol puts you at greater risk of being harmed. It can lessen your ability to react to dangerous situations.
- If you meet on the Internet, don't share personal information. Be careful not to say things that show where you live or go to school. You don't know for sure the person is really another student. If you make plans to meet face-to-face, be sure it is in a public place.
- Never send photos or videos of yourself that you would not want others to see - they just might end up online.
- If you have concerns, talk with your friends, parents, a counsellor, or some else you trust.